



United States  
of America

# Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 112<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 157

WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16, 2011

No. 40

## House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. ELLMERS).

### DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,

March 16, 2011.

I hereby appoint the Honorable RENEE ELLMERS to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,

*Speaker of the House of Representatives.*

### MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 5, 2011, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes each, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

### "FEARLESS"—STAFF SERGEANT MARK C. WELLS, U.S. ARMY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, most Americans are not personally affected by the two wars that America is engaged in the countries of Iraq and Afghanistan. We go about our daily routine. We are concerned about March Madness, the gasoline prices, but war does not really affect most Americans personally. The media doesn't put those events on the front page. They are more concerned about the personal

lives of celebrities than they are about the personal sacrifice of our warriors overseas.

But war is real. Real Americans are tenaciously fighting on two fronts for the rest of us. For them, it is personal; and for their families, it is very personal. The United States is engaged in the longest continuous combat in American history as our troops serve overseas.

Staff Sergeant Mark C. Wells was 31 years of age. He was a member of the United States Army, and he was killed on March 5, 2011, in the Helmand province of Afghanistan by an IED. That is an improvised explosive device. That is the way the cowards that we do battle with fight our troops. Of course, they wouldn't come out in the open because they would be overwhelmingly defeated.

Mark was born in San Jose, California, and his parents live in Spring, Texas, in my district. He joined the United States Army in 2003. Growing up he always said, "I want to be in the Army."

He was a volunteer, Madam Speaker, as all of those that are serving in Iraq and Afghanistan are. They are volunteers. They have the motto, "Here am I. Send me." And Mark went. He went to Iraq for 14 months serving on active duty, and he has been in Afghanistan since August of last year. He was a member of the 303 EOD Battalion and, get this, Madam Speaker, an explosive ordinance disposal technician. And, yes, that means exactly what it says.

His dad, Burl, told me this week that his son was "fearless." What a great attribute for an American warrior. And he also wanted to be a soldier. Also, at the age of 12, he learned how to play the bagpipes. It goes back to his Irish heritage. He grew up eating corned beef and cabbage. And when he was in Iraq, one of his assignments was to play the bagpipes at funerals for other soldiers that had been killed in combat.

He would continually say, "I love the Army." His dad said of his son Mark, "He was my personal hero."

His family said he was patriotic, he was a great dad, and he loved America. He leaves behind a wife, Danielle, who is 8 months pregnant, also a son named Finn that is 2 years of age.

His father would say that, "Mark understood the risk involved in being in the Army, but he loved what he was doing. And, what I miss most is I won't be able to talk to him anymore."

Madam Speaker, being in the Army affects people personally, like his father, Burl, and his mother, Sharon; his wife, Danielle; Finn, their son; and a baby yet to be born.

Mark Wells' memorial service will be on St. Patrick's Day. Yes, that Irish heritage comes into play.

Many of us in this House have been down the street at Arlington Cemetery to attend the funerals of our warriors that have been killed overseas. We all know about those bagpipers that stand on the hill and play "Amazing Grace" in the fog as we bury our war dead. So I suspect that on St. Patrick's Day another bagpiper will play for the funeral of Mark Wells, Staff Sergeant of the United States Army, and play that amazing song, "Amazing Grace."

Madam Speaker, the cause for America and the cause for freedom is expensive. It cost America a son, it cost America a husband, and it cost America a daddy.

Where does America get such great men? They are the rare breed. They are the American breed. And our prayers go out for his family. But while we mourn the loss of Mark Wells, we should also thank the good Lord that such men as Mark Wells ever lived.

And that's just the way it is.

### TAX EXPENDITURES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) for 5 minutes.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



Printed on recycled paper.

H1845